This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) A method for increasing the brightness of a semiconductor laser diode array, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a fiber coupled diode array coupled to a diode fiber bundle having a core fiber and a plurality of optical fibers concentrically disposed relative to said core fiber, said diode array coupled to said optically coupled to said concentrically disposed fibers;

(b) providing a dual clad fiber formed with a core, an inner cladding and an outer cladding, said dual clad fiber configured with an inner cladding having sufficient area to optically mate with said concentrically disposed optical fibers;

(c) providing a Stokes seed source;

(d) optically coupling said plurality of optical fibers to said inner cladding; and

(e) optically coupling said Stokes seed source to said core.

Claim 2 (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber formed from a glass material.

Claim 3 (Original) The method as recited in claim 2, wherein step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber formed from fused silica.

Claim 4 (Original) The method as recited in claim 2, wherein step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber formed from tellurite.

Claim 5 (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, where step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber formed with a core, an inner cladding and an outer cladding wherein the index of refraction of the inner cladding is less than the index of refraction of the core.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber formed with a core, an inner cladding and an outer cladding wherein the inner cladding has [a] an enclosed, noncircular shape.

Claim 7 (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber with a core, an inner cladding and an outer cladding wherein said inner cladding has a hexagonal cross section.

Claim 8 (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber with a core, an inner cladding and an outer cladding wherein said inner cladding has a rectangular cross section.

Claim 9 (Original) The method as recited in claim 5, wherein step (b) comprises providing a dual clad fiber formed with a core, an inner cladding and an outer cladding, wherein the index of refraction of the outer cladding is less than the index of refraction of the inner cladding.

Claim 10 (New) An optical fiber for use in a system for providing an increased light intensity from a plurality of semiconductor diodes, the optical fiber comprising:

a dual mode fiber which comprises a core, an inner cladding and an outer cladding, said inner cladding, concentrically disposed relative to said core and configured with sufficient area to optically mate with a predetermined fiber bundle and formed with a non-circular shape, wherein the index of refraction of said inner cladding is less than the index of refraction of said core and the index of refraction of said outer cladding is less than the index of refraction of said inner cladding, said outer cladding concentrically disposed relative to said inner cladding.

Claim 11 (New) The optical fiber as recited in claim 10, wherein said inner cladding has a generally rectangular cross section.

Claim 12 (New) The optical fiber as recited in claim 10, wherein said inner cladding has a generally hexagonal cross section.